

## **2017 HELENA OPEN LANDS WORK PLAN**

PRINCIPAL GOAL OF THE HELENA OPEN LANDS MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HOLMAC) WORK PLAN: To outline land management activities scheduled for implementation in the next 12 months. The work plan will be updated annually to address land management needs that have emerged as a result of input from the citizens of Helena, HOLMAC, and/or city staff. In accordance with the goals and objectives defined within the Helena Open Lands Management Plan, land stewardship activities shall be designed and implemented in a manner that will preserve, restore, and enhance the natural character of Helena's open lands and provide Helenans with accessible natural open lands.

### **FOREST MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:**

#### **D.N.R.C. – Community Forest Western Bark Beetle Grant**

- Complete 35 acres of slash pile burning, process final reimbursement request and associated project close-out documents.

#### **FEMA Pre Disaster Mitigation - Open Lands Fuel Reduction Project – 2010**

- Process final reimbursement request and associated project close-out documents.

#### **D.N.R.C. - Mt. Ascension Forest Fuels Reduction Project**

- Prepare and complete approximately 20 acres of forest fuel treatment work within Mt. Ascension Natural Park.

#### **D.N.R.C. – Open Lands PSR**

- Prepare and complete approximately 65 acres of forest fuel treatment work within the Open Lands system, process final reimbursement request and associated project close-out documents.

#### **D.N.R.C. – Mount Helena Fuels Reduction**

- Prepare and complete approximately 40 acres of forest fuel treatment work on the north face of Mount Helena.

#### **U.S.F.S. – Participating Agreement (Capital 360)**

- Prepare and complete approximately 60 acres of forest fuel and hazard tree treatment work on U.S.F.S. ownership in Grizzly Gulch.
- Prepare and complete approximately 220 acres of forestry maintenance work within the Open Lands system.

**Forest Fuel Treatment Grants**

- Complete applications as opportunities arise.

**Forestry Visuals**

- Remove retention tree and boundary identification flagging from all forestry projects completed to date.
- Respond to trash dumping and abandoned transient camps as needed.

**Forestry Education**

- Participate in community forestry outreach efforts as opportunities arise.

**Firewood Distribution**

- Harvest, forward, and process approximately 100 cords of firewood material for clients of the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)
- Assist in the organization of volunteers involved in the splitting and distribution of accumulated firewood material during the January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017 timeframe.

**PROPERTY ACQUISITION/EXCHANGE:****Property Acquisition**

- Assist in the completion of property acquisition grant applications as opportunities become available.
- Respond to public and partnership requests regarding potential purchase/sale/exchange of open lands properties.

**WEED MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:****Subcommittee/Code Enforcement Officer**

- Participate in insects collections for Dalmatian Toadflax, Leafy Spurge, and Spotted Knapweed coordinated by the state bio control coordinator.
- Assist in monitoring of insect release sites for potential collection.
- Mark an additional 10-15 past release sites.
- Update insect release map and include newly marked sites.
- Target fuel reduction units for potential weed treatment.

**Public Education**

- Coordinate groups for weed pulls throughout the summer. (PPLT Weed Social).

- Make weed education/identification videos to post to webpage/Facebook.

### **Noxious Weed Treatment**

- Use herbicide to treat 2017 selected target areas (approx. 200 acres).
- Participate in insects collections for Leafy Spurge and Spotted Knapweed coordinated by the state bio control coordinator.
- Learn bio control monitoring techniques and processes through training offered by state bio control coordinator.
- Schedule and participate in weed pulls on open lands.
- Apply for a 2017 Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant. (Pending)

### **TRAILS AND RECREATION MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:**

#### ***Prickly Pear Land Trust Agreement***

**Trail Construction** – All new trail construction routes are subject to verbal approval by the City of Helena Parks Department liaison prior to the initiation of trail construction activities. Contractor shall identify trail construction routes with pin flags and/or ribbons situated within four feet of the intended construction route.

- Mount Ascension Trail (2006 to Entertainment): construct a trail 24 inches wide of native material from the 2006 trail to the Entertainment trail along a route designated by City staff with ribbons and pin flags. Woody vegetation located within 36 inches of the centerline (clearance limits) of the designated trail construction route will be severed at ground level and removed from the clearance limits of the trail route by City staff within 10 days of receiving a verbal request to complete said clearing work from Contractor.
- Mount Ascension Trail (Easy Ride to Prickly Pear): construct a trail 24 inches wide of native material between the Easy Rider trail and Prickly Pear trail along a route designated by City staff with ribbons and pin flags. Woody vegetation located within 36 inches of the centerline (clearance limits) of the designated trail construction route will be severed at ground level and removed from the clearance limits of the trail route by City staff within 10 days of receiving a verbal request to complete said clearing work from Contractor.
- Bull Run Trail (Gold Rush Avenue to South California Street): construct a trail 36 inches wide of native material along a route designated by City staff with ribbons and pin flags.

### **Trail Improvement**

- Powerline Trail: Maintenance of drainage features.

### **Adopt-A-Trail Volunteer Program**

- Proactively engage individuals and groups for participation.
- Produce an annual activity report for the Adopt-A-Trail program and deliver the completed report to the City of Helena.

### **Mapping**

- South Hills Trail map update: Provide GPS data to City including trail re-routes and/or new trails, improved trails, parking areas, proposed routes, etc.

### **Miscellaneous Tasks**

- Close social trails occurring along 2006 trail.
- Coordinate volunteer activities (Workdays, Boy Scouts, Corporate and NGO's, Weed Pull events, etc.)
- Investigate transfer of privately owned parcel ownership to City ownership (5 adjacent to Mount Ascension Natural Park, several adjacent to Mount Helena City Park in the LeGrande Cannon Blvd area)
- Complete trail user counts using electronic tally devices at the following trailheads: Mount Helena (Reeders Village), Dump Gulch, South Beattie Street, DeFord (Eagle Scout Trail), Dry Gulch (Old Shooting Range), Tubbs. Compile collected data and deliver an annual report (Trail Counter Report) that includes chronological line charts depicting monthly use that are organized by type (foot, bicycle), and trailhead. The delivered report shall include a narrative for each collection point that outlines methodology, assumptions and any data irregularities that may have been noted.

### ***Helena Parks Department***

- Complete pedestrian bridge along Bull Run Trail.
- Complete monthly inspections of entire trail system and associated wayfinding signage.
- Construct trail signs and install/replace as needed.
- Respond to trail issues throughout the year as needs arise.

- Continue to implement the social trail management recommendations provided by HOLMAC.

## **FACILITIES:**

### **Trailheads**

- Complete Beattie Trailhead expansion project.
- Complete the installation of a vaulted restroom facility, trailhead entrance sign, kiosk, picnic tables, trash receptacles, and pet waste stations at the Beattie Street Trailhead parking area.
- Install trash receptacles and pet waste stations at the Meatloaf & Old Shooting Range trailheads.
- Expand the Lower Davis Street parking areas.
- Complete the Waterline Extension Trail parking area.
- Construct and install a kiosk at the Saddle Drive parking area.
- Install park and trail use rules/etiquette information at the Mount Helena Trailhead.

### **Archery Range**

- Install a new entrance gate.
- Install road edge markers at the intersection of Davis Street and the Archery Range entrance road.

## **FENCE CONSTRUCTION & REMOVAL:**

- Construct a post and rail fence segments as needed for resource protection.
- Identify sections of dysfunctional wire fence occurring upon City of Helena open lands properties and schedule removal.
- Design and construct fence segments required to protect resource needs and/or visually identify open lands property lines.

## **BOUNDARY IDENTIFICATION:**

- Verify open lands boundaries as budgets allow. Prioritize open lands boundary identification needs according to program of work and emerging management issues.
- Install boundary identification posts at approximate 50 foot intervals where encroachment situations are identified.

**RECLAMATION:**

- Utilize a grass seed mixture containing one or more of the following native grasses: Slender wheatgrass (*Elymus trachycaulus* ssp. *trachycaulus*), Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis* variety Joseph or Nez Perce), Bluebunch wheatgrass (*Agropyron spicatum* or *Pseudoroegenaria spicata* var Goldar)
- Monitor previously seeded areas.